



Michigan Organizations and Resources for Voting

To Find Your Local City or County Clerk's Office
visit: <http://www.sospublius.org> or call 1-800-292-5973

Secretary of State - Bureau of Elections
<http://www.michigan.gov/sos/> or 1-800-292-5973

Detroit Branch NAACP
<http://www.detroitnaacp.org/politics/voting.asp>
or (313) 871-2087

League of Women Voters - Michigan
<http://www.lwvmi.org/> or (517) 484-5383



National Organizations and Resources for Voting

Voter's Research Hotline
<http://www.vote-smart.org>
1-888-VOTE-SMART (1-888-868-3762)

Rock The Vote
<http://www.rockthevote.com>

Stand and Be Counted
<http://www.standandbecounted.org/>

Declare Yourself
<http://www.declareyourself.com/>

USA Votenet
<http://www.usavotenet.com/>

Disability Vote Project
<http://www.aapd.com/dvpmain/newdvpindex.html>
or Voice/TTY: 1-800-840-8844

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Contacts for Voting Related Problems or Complaints

FOR IMMEDIATE ASSISTANCE ON ELECTION DAY

- FIRST:** contact your city or county clerk's office and ask them to help you resolve the problem. If you do not know how to contact your clerk, visit: <http://www.sospublius.org> or call the Michigan Bureau of Elections at 1-800-292-5973 and ask for the phone number to your city or county clerk's office.
- **SECOND:** contact the Michigan Bureau of Elections at 1-800-292-5973. If your local clerk's office is unwilling or unable to resolve the issue, call the Michigan Bureau of Elections and ask them to help you resolve the problem.
 - **THIRD:** contact the Election Protection Coalition at 1-866-OUR-VOTE (1-866-687-8683) and request assistance resolving your issue.

TO FILE A WRITTEN COMPLAINT AFTER ELECTION

- **Contact the U.S. Dept. of Justice - Voting Section** at 1-800-253-3931, or visit the website <http://usdoj.gov/crt/voting>
- **Contact the Michigan Bureau of Elections** at 1-800-292-5973 or visit <http://www.michigan.gov/sos>

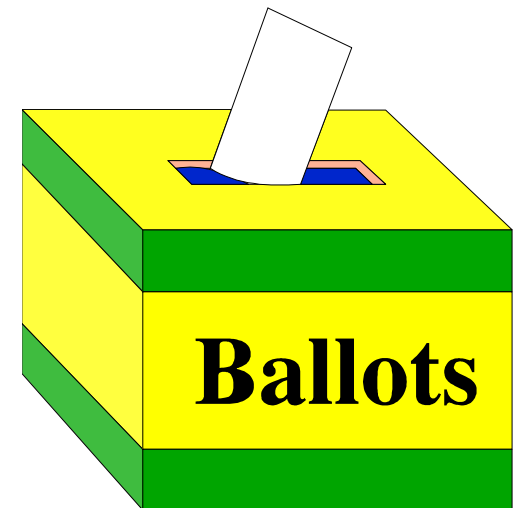
Michigan Department of Civil Rights
Capital Tower Building
110 W. Michigan Ave, Suite 800
Lansing, MI 48933

For more information :
1-800-482-3604 or <http://www.mi.gov/mdcr>
TTY: (877) 878-8464

Michigan Department of Civil Rights

VOTING

What you should know



Be An Informed Voter!
The right to vote is a nonpartisan issue



About the Michigan Department of Civil Rights

The Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR) was established in 1965 to investigate complaints of illegal discrimination and work to prevent discrimination through educational programs that promote voluntary compliance with civil rights laws.

MDCR published this brochure as part of its effort to ensure the equal right to vote. MDCR has both jurisdiction and interest in preserving the right of all citizens to participate equally in the voting process regardless of religion, race, color, national origin, sex, age, marital status, or disability.



Short History of the Right and Responsibility to Vote

Today, all residents of Michigan over the age of 18, not currently incarcerated due to conviction of a felony, are eligible to vote. For some Americans however this right did not come easy. The 15th Amendment to the Constitution, ratified in 1870, gave African American men the right to vote. This amendment was counteracted however by state and local tactics such as poll taxes, literacy tests and often outright violence and intimidation. After a seventy year battle, women finally gained the right to vote in 1920. American Indians gained both citizenship and the right to vote in 1924. Finally in 1965, the Voting Rights Act nullified any local laws and practices used to prevent persons of color from voting.

The history of the responsibility to vote is still being written. The democratic process has always hinged on the active participation of the citizens. According to the Federal Elections Commission website at www.fec.gov, in the 2000 presidential election, about 93% of Michigan's voting age population was registered to vote, but only 57% of Michigan's voting age population actually voted. **Voting is not just a right, it's a responsibility!**



Myths and Facts about Voting

MYTH	FACT
If you are awaiting a trial, you are not allowed to vote.	In the state of Michigan, if you are in jail awaiting arraignment or trial, you are eligible to obtain an absentee ballot.
If you have served time in jail in the state of Michigan, you forfeit all voting rights.	Michigan allows an individual to vote even if they have been convicted in state or federal court, unless the person is currently incarcerated.
Only English - speaking citizens are qualified to vote.	The Voting Rights Act requires particular polling locations to print ballots and other election materials in languages other than English, and have oral translation help available at polls, where the need exists.
You must finish high school to be eligible to vote in Michigan.	You are eligible to vote if you are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * At least 18 years of age * Not presently incarcerated * A Michigan resident/ citizen of the United States * Registered to vote
In the year 2007, the Voting Rights Act will expire, and all people of color will lose their right to vote.	The Voting Rights Act is a permanent federal law, and the equal right to vote regardless of race or color is protected by the 15th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.
If you are a person with a disability, you may not have someone else read the ballot and record your vote for you.	Michigan law entitles persons with disabilities to reasonable accommodations so they can vote. Accommodations may include absentee voter ballots or taking a person of your choice to read the ballot.



Pay Close Attention When You Hear This...

"We are investigating voting irregularities. I need to ask you a few questions before I can let you vote."

"I can't let you vote because your name does not appear on our lists."

"Even if you have voted in Michigan before, you must provide two forms of identification before voting."

"I'm sorry, the voting office is closed for a break."

"Did you move since the last election? We don't have your name, so you have to go back to wherever you voted last time."

"Do you have a criminal record or any outstanding warrants?"

"Are you currently in bankruptcy, or have any outstanding debts that might have been referred to a collection agency?"

"I'm sorry, we don't have the equipment to accommodate your disability, I'm afraid you cannot vote today."

"One of our officials will have to accompany you into the voting booth."

"The voting equipment is down right now, maybe you should come back later on."

"You are not able to redo your ballot if you make a mistake."

"Who will you be voting for today?"

If you hear these statements immediately consult the organizations on the back of this brochure!!!



Name Not On the List?

If you are told your name does not appear on the registration list, ask to complete a provisional ballot under the federal HAVA regulations. The provisional ballot allows you to fill out a ballot, and have the county or city clerk determine within 6 days whether the ballot can be counted. HAVA also requires that the city or county clerk accepting the provisional ballot provide a cost-free method so voters can find out if their ballot counted and what they can do to make sure it counts next time.